

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph bridging pages 10 and 11 with the following amended paragraph:

First, in the initializing step (S141), a data parameter (s) for counting the path selection data, ~~a frame length indicating parameter (i) for indicating a possible frame length,~~ a frame length parameter (Ei) for indicating a possible length of the frame, a frame length indicating parameter (i) for use in the parameter Ei for indicating a possible frame length, and a longest possible frame length (En) for indicating the longest possible frame length, are initialized. Provided that the total number of the possible frame lengths is (n), the frame length indicating parameter (i) varies from one (1) to (n) for counting the number of the possible frame lengths. When the frame length indicating parameter (i) is initialized, the frame length parameter (Ei) is allotted with an i-th possible frame length. After the initializing step (S141), the data parameter increasing step (S142) is performed. In the path selection data storing step (S413), path selection data corresponding to the increased data parameter (s) is stored. In the frame length comparing step (S144), the increased data parameter (s) is compared with the frame length parameter (Ei). After the frame length comparing step (S144), the decoding depth comparing step (S145) is performed, comparing the data parameter (s) with the decoding depth (D) when the data parameter (s) is determined to be different from the frame length parameter (Ei) in the frame length comparing step (S144). If the data parameter (s) is determined to be smaller than the decoding depth (D) in the decoding depth comparing step (S145), the data parameter increasing step (S142) is performed.